

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Dulles Blocked Visit By Zhukov

By Drew Pearson

State Department officials, men who know the inside of how secret police, Allen Dulles, the chief, John Foster Dulles, said, and seemed sure to take persuaded President Eisenhower over Khrushchev's job.

Lower not to invite Marshal Zhukov to Washington last summer, a figure that history inside the Kremlin might be entirely different today if Dulles' persuasion had not prevailed.



Last month, furthermore, the CIA chief, speaking in San Francisco, made an unusual public statement that Russia was disrupted by political cross-currents and that Khrushchev seemed headed for trouble.

A trip by Zhukov to Washington would have enhanced his prestige with the Russian people that he could not have been demoted.

On one basic point, of course, Allen Dulles was right. Zhukov was grabbing for power. But what Dulles underestimated was Khrushchev's ability to cope with this. He also overestimated the political power of the Red army.

Meeting on Cruiser

What happened was that last summer the President definitely wanted to invite his old wartime buddy to Washington for a talk on improvement of Russian-American relations. This was reported by this column on Aug. 23, 1955, and later confirmed by the President in a press conference.

As far as can be pieced together, here are the inside facts which caused Khrushchev to move in on the man who had helped him save his job when he faced rebellion from Molotov, Malenkov, et al., last spring.

But Dulles talked the President out of the meeting.

Shortly before Marshal Zhukov left for Yugoslavia he held a secret meeting aboard the Russian cruiser Kuibyshev at Sevastopol, the great Soviet submarine base in the Black Sea. Present were the top military commanders of the Red army.

At that time both Chancellor Adenauer of Germany and the British were worried about any moves which looked like too much friendship between the United States and the U.S.S.R. and any side-deal of disarmament. Harold Stassen in London had been telling the Russians privately and the British and Germans protested to Dulles. So the Secretary of State, fearing the President would get too chummy with Marshal Zhukov if he came to Washington, persuaded the President not to issue the invitation.

Zhukov is reported to have told them that he was opposed to any military adventures in the Near East which would bring Russia into conflict with the United States. He was not against political moves in the Near East, but he was against any risk of war.

CIA Caught Napping

Allen Dulles, you may remember, is the brother of the Secretary of State and head of Central Intelligence, has been right than wrong in forecasting out backstage events in Europe. But he was completely off base when he said down about Marshal Zhukov and party chief Khrushchev.

He further told Soviet commanders that Russia should concentrate on consolidating its position at home, not strike out in the Near East.

About two days later Zhukov was recalled to Moscow and sent a report to the House expressing the fact that Zhukov was a fast and might be a military demagogue.

Zhukov also wanted to tighten Russian control over the satellites. As a military man he viewed Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria as buffer states which would absorb the first brunt of attack in case of war. He did not agree with Khrushchev's more lenient policy toward Poland and the satellites, and it will be recalled that it was Zhukov who came down on Hungary last year when it had bucked the Soviet line. It was already known that the ambassadors attached to the

kept the military from dominating the Communist Party.

All this apparently was too much for Khrushchev, and when the secret meeting at Sevastopol came to his attention, the head of the Communist Party moved, while Zhukov was in Belgrade, to plan to promote him upstairs to an ignominious but face-saving post. Zhukov refused. Hence the showdown inside the Kremlin.

Hotter than hell Zhukov is given credit for getting Tito to extend Yugoslav recognition to East Germany. Since Tito was looked upon as the master of independence among the satellites, his recognition of East Germany was a real setback for him and a victory for Zhukov's policy of a tight rein on satellite nations around